113, 526 W. Tibetans AJ4

[For information about the game of polo, see 1: Drew, AV1 Kashmir, category 116, p. 381.]

1: Cunningham G-3 (1846-47) 1854 AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4

The favourite amusement of the Botis, both of Ladák and of Balti, is *Polo*, in which all parties from the highest to the lowest can take a part. I saw the game played at Mulbil, in a field 400 yards long and eighty yards broad, which was walled round for the purpose with a stone dyke. There were twenty players on each side, all mounted on ponies and armed with sticks about four feet long, and bent at the lower end. One player took the ball and advanced alone into the middle of the field, where he threw up the ball and as it fell struck it towards one of the goals. The goals were formed of two upright stones placed about twenty-five or thirty feet apart. When the ball was driven through a goal, one of the successful party was obliged to dismount and pick it up, for if the opposite party should have driven it back before it was picked up, the goal did not count. The game consisted in winning a certain number of goals, either five, seven, or nine. Numerous musicians were in attendance, who made a most lively din whenever a goal was won; and the noise was increased by the cheers of the successful party.

The game is a very spirited one, and well calculated for the display of bold and active horsemanship.* Accidental blows occur frequently, but the poor ponies are the principal sufferers. The game was once common in India under the name of *Chaogan*, but it is now completely forgotten. The old chaogan-grounds still exist in every large town in the Panjáb hills; in Bilâspur, Nadon, Shujanpur, Kangrá, Haripur, and Chamba, where the goal-stones are still standing. The game is

* It is well and tersely described by Vigne as "hockey on horseback." Mr. Thornton calls it "*cricket* on horseback;" but it has nothing whatever in common with cricket.

towards him. But when they noticed the strange thing, they became 539
mortally frightened, and in their [redacted] they raced to a high cliff and tumbling headfirst into the aby[redacted] were shattered to pieces. The frightened mother rushed after her children and wanting to seize them by the tail to hold them back she fell with them into the depth below; the father bear who wanted to save the mother followed after her into the horrible abyss /48/ Thus no one was left who could report to the king about the new mischief that the fox had created. The latter enjoyed his flour porridge, lay down on his ear, and fell asleep as though nothing bad had happened.

Konchog Trashi told Namgyal and his companions many another 538
story about the sly fox (24) and his mischievous tricks, all of which

24. The Tibetans, like other peoples of Asia, have a collection of stories which greatly resemble the stories about Renard the Fox.

were eagerly received and retold to others by the boys.

/Following p. 48 there are two full-page illustrations in the text, one with the subtitle: "An onpo (soothsayer) and magician"; the other with the legend: "The reincarnated Bakula (Mushog), abbot of the monastery Spituk. "/

/49/ Namgyal's Schooling

When Namgyal was a cycle of twelve (lo-skor), that is to say, 000
12 years old, his father said to him one dreary winter day, as he saw his boy playing ball (25) with his comrades on one of the field terraces [526].

25. A kind of hockey game.

free of snow: "It would be better for you if you learned to read and write instead of spending your time here with useless play. If you learn that, it will be of use to you later when you want to do business. Then you must be able to write out bills and receipts, and sometimes you will also have to compose a letter; and if you should become village magistrate some day, as I am now, then you will certainly have a great deal of writing to do." For a year now, Lobsang Wanggyal had 622
occupied the post; he was village magistrate (go-po) of Kalatse. In 651
this office he had to collect the taxes in order to deliver them to the

368 spin thread on the hand spindle from coarse goat's or yak's hair, from which the village weaver then wove strong blankets and sacks. He sat firmly in the saddle and was a good polo player (26). Soon Namgyal

[526]

26. In the mountains of the Himalayas a riding game, polo, has been preserved. It originated with the ancient Persians and was subsequently introduced into their courts by the Byzantine emperors. For a long time the game appeared to be forgotten until the Mogul emperors of India again discovered it among certain mountain peoples and introduced it anew into their courts. This ball game on horseback makes tremendous demands upon the agility and adroitness of the rider as well as upon the speed and suppleness of the horse.

was superior to his elders in matter of practical common sense and caution, in industry and in courage, the latter probably an inheritance from his fathers, some of whom had proved themselves valiant heroes in the wars against the neighboring Baltis and the Dogras, an /52/ inheritance probably, also, from his energetic grandmother Tsering Putrid.

000 At the same time Namgyal had a strong tendency towards the religious, a tendency which, however, always remained unsatisfied. He often pondered over religious questions and brooded about the meaning of existence, the nature of the karma, the transmigration of souls, about the "eight-fold path" of release which Buddha had shown to his disciples, about the salvation activities of the Buddhistic "saviors"; but he also thought about the order of the monks and about the priests and their doings. But as often as he asked his teacher, the Lama Dondrub, and as often as he asked an explanation of deeper questions, the latter would put him off with a few superficial observations saying that he could not understand these matters yet; so that the young man's questions and the desires of his heart remained unsatisfied. The behavior and conduct of the greedy, sensual lama who was also given to drinking, was of such a kind that the belief of the young Namgyal in these members of the "Sacred Community of Monks, " to whom he was supposed to look up with reverence and awe as a pious Buddhist, became severely shaken. And his longing for peace and freedom remained unstilled. Even the well-intentioned instructions of the pious hermit Tsetan were unable to satisfy him.

900 at this wonder of technology.

527 The castle, which the Gyalpo now entered with his following,
[344] was an enormous, massive, nine-storied structure which had once been erected by the /133/ mighty king Sengge Namgyal (meaning "lion--great conqueror") in the 17th century. Now the huge building usually stood empty, and rats, owls, and bats had made themselves at home in it. Only at certain festive occasions the lions' gate opens and allows noble guests to enter into the barren, empty rooms. The old walls at these times again echo with gay music and festive shouting for a few brief days. For five days on end the grandees of Ladakh celebrate the New Year here with their king. They eat, they drink, the old songs resound in which the heroic deeds of the mythical Kesar, the "son of the gods," and of the old Ladakh kings are praised, and in which the gods and the lamas are glorified. The musical band, which still bears
[563] the proud name of the "castle band" (k'ar-mon), and which is composed entirely of Mons (see note 12!), plays old tunes on clarinets and drums in a wild and frenzied rhythm. The dancers, men and women
[526] separately, rock themselves in dance; polo games and horse races are organized, for which the gentlemen move to the polo field at the bazaar. Namgyal very eagerly participated in the polo games, he was one of the best players. The people, usually accustomed to deprivations of all kinds, enjoy these rare pleasures in full draughts and give themselves over to uninhibited merriment.

527 On the third holiday, the 30th of the tenth month, Namgang,
782 the last day of the moon month, on which no moon brightens the evening sky, Namgyal, at the king's command, rode with him and the other grandees in the early morning to Sheh, a village on the Indus, about seven kilometers removed from Leh. In Sheh there was also a royal castle. From there they went on to the nearby monastery Trigtse, which is situated on a steep cliff. There the king, with his retinue, prayed before the large statue of Gautama Buddha; and his people, in his presence, filled with new butter the cone-shaped "Eternal Lamp" (lo-kon), which was about one meter high and stood in front of the image. This was an offering and a "prayer" to the Buddha for the duration of the coming year, so that the mercy of the mighty one might shine in the coming year in the dark Beyond for the
527 king and his people. On the way back the men were always careful,
778 as they had been on their way out, to ride in such a manner that they always had the long 'manes' (prayer walls) which were constructed along the way, and the longest of which is over 600 meters, /134/ on

787 "Here on this slip of paper it is written how we are to ward off the evil spirits this year. Surely you are going to follow these directions? Isn't that so, Namgyal?" "Oh, oh!" said the latter and with complete calm he stuck the dirty slip of paper into a crack in the large beam of the ceiling in the chansa.

Many Tibetans who wanted to be quite sure in their doings and who could afford it, went to the oracle man (rtsis-pa) in the Lamayuru monastery around the turn of the year. The oracle man sold his wisdom at a greater price than did the onpo. The old teller of fairytales, Gyamtsopa, however, knew how to go about foretelling the future in a cheaper way than those mentioned above. He took the shoulder blade of a freshly killed sheep, cleaned off all particles of flesh, held it in the fire so that it bent and shrunk from the heat. Then he held it against the light and looked at the figures that had formed in the tissue. "There--a rider! A red Tsan-demon! There--a woman's figure with snakes above her head! An evil water nymph! Threatening figures! There a child's head--that means an increase in the family; an ear of grain--rich harvest! In a similar way fresh sheep's intestines prognosticated the future for him, as did, furthermore, the bones of birds or little stones that he threw on the ground with a practised hand. From the figures which are formed in this manner or which his imagination painted to him he gave the people who consulted him and who flocked to him in great numbers, "glimpses into the future." He made it cheap for them: a few measures of barley, a piece of butter, a jug of beer, a few anna (one anna equals eight and one-half Pfenning).

527 One to one and a half months after the dosmoche festival (from the middle to the end of March) the storlog (gtor-log) is celebrated in all the large and small villages. This is a spring festival at which the exorcism of the threatening demons is again in the foreground. This exorcism is carried out by means of a storma (gtor-ma), a scattered offering with the exorcising formulas belonging to it. Here too there are numerous amusements. The men shoot with arrows at targets that have been set up. Certainly /143/ this shooting of arrows originally had a mythological significance. This is indicated by the songs of the mythical great king Kesar, the "son of the gods," in which his heroic deeds are sung. On the occasion of this festival they shoot with bow [526] and arrow during the hours of daylight. Nowadays there is not much skill being demonstrated in this archery. When the Tibetans were still a warlike people, even when the musket flints had already come into use, the art of shooting arrows was practised industriously. During the long period of [illegible] the art of archery [illegible] into disuse.

13: Heber and Heber D-3 (1914-25) 1926 AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4

bottoms of their dressing-gown coats into their ample belts, and play with bare or merely stockinged feet, whilst their younger brothers enjoy their game just as thoroughly when they play it with a rag ball. The game of marbles too has found its way here, but must adapt itself to the poverty of the country. Stones as round as can be found are used, or if walnuts abound they do service for a similar game. A hole is dug in the ground or in the raised base of a *chorten*, and the aim is to throw as many of these walnuts into it as possible. Nor are the Ladaki lasses without their games. A finger or stick traces in the sand and dust the lines necessary for hopscotch just as efficiently as the chalk-line on a London pavement, and little Ladaki legs, although they are shod with clumsy native footgear, do their hopping just as nimbly as those of their English sisters.

The Ladaki also believes in the dictum, "what thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might," at least as far as games are concerned, and with a little training he would compete on equal terms with our own countrymen. Those boys sent down-country to the Rev. C. E. Tyndale Biscoe's splendid school rapidly pick up hockey, tennis, badminton, swimming and rowing, in fact, excel in all sports. But let us now watch them at their own national games, the favourite being polo. Ladak may not be the home of polo, but it certainly found its way here at an early date. Even if it arose in Persia, it very soon migrated to Gilgit, and the Dards, no doubt, brought it with them to Ladak, and now it is not even a hyphenated Ladaki game, for most good-sized villages have their own polo ground. In Leh, the capital, the game was formerly played in the high street, but this evidently became so dangerous for the shopkeepers that now we have a proper polo ground. This consists of a level space about two hundred yards long, which cannot boast of a blade of grass, but is covered by a layer of dust so thick that before play begins, it has to be laid with water. On one side it is bounded

13: Heber and Heber D-3 (1914-25) 1926 AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4

526 345 by the high wall of the Wazir's or State Commissioner's garden, on the other by a low wall about one foot high built of large stones, piled one on top of the other without mortar or cement or even mud. Halfway along this, a platform of mud and stones has been erected, from the top of which "the notables" watch the game, a *Shamiana* or awning being erected on high days. Two large stones at either end are [534] sufficient as goal-posts. On the ground itself to one side sits the band of four; two flageolets and two kettle-drums. These at one moment are announcing another goal obtained and at another are defending themselves from the polo sticks, for 526 the game is raging right in their midst. But now let us turn our attention to the players and their mounts. Here it is not the rich man's game, a stud of horses is quite unnecessary. Even a poor farmer possesses one pony, and if he makes himself a stick, he, too, can join in. The stick is quite easily manufactured, its shape being that of an English hockey stick, but with a longer handle. By making this and the striking end of two pieces, and letting the former into the latter, a rude splice is obtained. Rules for play there would seem to be none. If your opponent gets in your way, ride him down. If only six players have come, three a side will do, if ten players turn up, two fives make an equally good game. Although play can last for as long as you like, the same poor miserable pony is used the whole time, and will hardly enjoy it as much as the English one is said to do.

Now the play begins. The ball has been thrown into the centre of the course and four horsemen are trying to get it. A pig-tailed Ladaki has it, and is riding as hard as he can for his opponents' goal. His hitting is beautifully clean, and the playing of the band announces a goal for his side. His enemies' posts now become his own, which he has to defend. Now watch him carefully, for he will show you a pretty piece of play. He has dismounted, picked up the ball, and, remounting, takes both it and his stick in his right hand, then gallops

13: Heber and Heber D-3 (1914-25) 1926 AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4

down the field as hard as he can. Reaching the half-way approximately, he throws up the ball, and, with the stick, which is still in the same hand, he hits the ball full and straight into the enemies' goal. To do this at such a pace needs good horsemanship and a wonderfully steady eye and aim. Ends are changed again and the ball is in play. There goes a little fellow from Chushot on his very disreputable pony with saddle tied on none too firmly. The ball is rather beyond his ordinary reach, but what matter, for he has only to lean right out of his saddle, so that, if desired, he could almost touch the ground ; by this means he reaches the ball. There he goes again, but alas, this time his saddle will not stand the strain, swings round with him, and leaves him lying somewhere beneath his pony. Listen to the roars of laughter which greet his performance. Now a Mohammedan from Leh has the ball. A good player that, but his shot has not been accurate, and instead of landing in between the goal-posts, it has gone straight into the crowd of spectators. " Was there a man dismayed ? " Not one, for if anybody has been hurt, he is nursing his pain in secret. Thus the game goes on; it may be for an hour or even more. Scoring is high, for there is not much ground between the opposing goal-posts.

During the summer months the British Joint Commissioner sometimes likes to play. To provide him with regular sport, a certain number of men from the village of Chushot are detailed to appear twice weekly and this is regarded as their share of forced labour. If they do not play well, a threat that no improvement in their style will spell the ordinary *begar* (forced labour) with its carrying of loads, soon mends matters. One year we were able to play a game of England versus Ladak. Two " Varsity " men were shooting up here, and they, with the Commissioner and the Doctor, represented Britain. Ladak certainly put one of its strongest teams on the field. Difficulties soon arose for the visitors, for they were not able tothrow the ball up and hit it while riding even at a

13: Heber and Heber D-3 (1914-25) 1926 AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4

slow trot. One alternative only remained: No. 1 had to drop the ball at the mid-line, whilst No. 2 who was riding immediately behind was expected to hit it. During the first half the European combination did wonders, and at half time were leading by four goals, but this put the home team on its mettle, and they gradually caught up. Time, however, was in favour of the visitors, who won their game by one goal. Will such a match ever be played again?

Next let us go to the bazar and watch the horse-racing. This peculiar species of horse-racing is quite in keeping with this quaint country. We take up our positions on the verandah of the post office. At the further end of the bazar about thirty ponies and their jockeys are gathered. First along the course comes a rider decked out in the most wonderful garments. His dress is a beautifully embroidered Chinese mandarin's robe and the insignia of his office is a tigerskin tunic. On his head he wears a large round hat covered with gilt tinsel, the crown rising to a dome, surmounted by a knob to which streamers of gilt tinsel passing from the brim are attached. This is quite a personage, who assumes the title of *glabdag*, which means one to whom the gods are subject. The office boasts a long lineage and is traceable to pre-Buddhist times. Its representative is always chosen from one of three families, and his duty is to serve the King personally, one especial task being to change the pencil cedar on His Majesty's altar on New Year's day. When he rides ahead of all the jockeys, he is acting as his King's Viceroy. Having led the way, the race can begin, but a starter is quite unnecessary. Each man starts off just when he likes and simply tears down the bazar as hard as his pony will carry him; though they often elect to start in a bunch, there seems to be no purposeful relationship between them, and odd ones left far behind carry on with equal zest. Needless to say bookies are unnecessary. Sometimes a wag will add to the delight of the spectators by performing gymnastic feats as he rides, possibly having dressed

13: Heber and Heber D-3 (1914-25) 1926 AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4

up to enhance the exhibition, which is loudly applauded. When all have ridden the course, they canter back and repeat from the beginning. This goes on for two or three days, and Ladakis find it interesting to the end. Sometimes the amusement becomes intense, when, for instance, a horse has shed his rider, because the saddle had not been fixed on firmly, and the racer finishes his course with empty back.

Games on horseback are most desirable at this altitude, where human lungs find scarcely enough oxygen for strenuous exertion, and Ladak is adding a Yarkandi equestrian game to its repertoire. No sides are picked, but there is a goal. A dead sheep is thrown on to the ground. At one time no doubt they played with a live animal, for Yarkandis do not think much about "Prevention of Cruelty to Animals" Societies. A man catches up the sheep as best he can and then rides with it for the goal. If he accomplishes this, he may look forward to many a big supper of mutton, but all the other horsemen try to make this impossible. The falls, pullings, and pushings this piece of mutton gets, should go far to make it tender, whatever its age may be.

Another sport which the Ladakis thoroughly enjoy is arrow shooting. This always takes place in the spring, just before the fields are sown, the Mohammedans and the Buddhists having each their own archery meeting. A garden or an enclosure with trees round an open space is chosen, at one end of which a heap of earth is piled up about four feet high. Into the centre of this is stuck a bull's-eye, about the size of a china plate and made of white clay. At the opposite end, about twenty yards from the target, are several tents, nicely decorated, in which sit those members of their respective community, who, by subscribing towards the shoot, have bought themselves the right to be present and take part. Others may join in, but are there on sufferance, and if they have not paid, even superb shooting will not obtain th

13: Heber and Heber D-3 (1914-25) 1926 AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4

526 [534] applause of either the band or the onlookers. Is it necessary to say that the inevitable band is there[1] also? The shooting begins. An archer takes up his position, draws his bow, his friends encouraging him by calling: "*Shok, shok, shok, shok, shok, shok, shok,*" and continuing to do so until the shaft has flown. Should it break the clay, the band strikes up and is rewarded with a backsheesh, whilst the archer has a salutation scarf thrown round his neck. If an enemy should be shooting, he can be discouraged by shouting:—"*Kyor, kyor, kyor,*" which means "miss." All having loosed their arrows, of which each man shoots three, they retire for refreshments and conversation, whilst the arrows are fetched back. This competition also lasts three days, during which Leh is not allowed to forget it, for the continuous beating of the kettle-drums is constantly inviting more spectators to the show.

774 In concluding this chapter we would like to refer to some of the sport which the white man enjoys in this country. A certain number of shooting licences are given every year, namely twenty for the first half of the year and twenty for the second. These are generally used by Army officers, men of the 000 finest stamp. It is only the "stern strong souls, who love the wild," who would face the biting winds which howl across these upland plains, who would put up with the loneliness, and often the bad cooking and limited supplies, which shooting there entails, and who would follow their quarry even to 17,000 feet, though already lungs are working at bursting point. To have to shoot immediately after such a climb, when one is still breathing hard, the heart working at about one hundred and twenty to the minute, and the hands shaking from exertion, is no easy matter. And yet it is worth it all. Is there anything on God's earth more thrilling than a few days up in His hills with a good rifle in one's hands and a splendid animal to be stalked? It seems such a pity that the expense makes this almost prohibitive for our younger officers, for surely such a holiday must make them fitter for

[1] [i.e., at archery contests.—ANALYST.]

2: Gervis T-3 (no date) 1954 AV1 Kashmir
W. Tibetans AJ 4

771 are few. It was the Emperor Asoka, the great missionary-
779 monarch, who between the years 272 and 231 B.C. first sent Buddhist missionaries to Ladakh on goodwill missions, and on their arrival there they built monasteries.

[212] The people of this land claim that ninety per cent of the popu-
181 lation are literate although they are simple and unsophisticated;
533 they are carefree, gay and sociable, the smallest excuse providing
535 for a feast with laughter, dancing and singing, with an opportunity for drinking large quantities of *chang*, which results in general drunkenness. Births, marriages and even deaths are ordinary occasions for feasting and drinking, with singing and dancing girls always a part of the entertainment. Arthur Neve said of them, "They are a contented cheerful race, neither quarrelsome nor revengeful, or rarely so under the influence of *chang*, a sort of barley beer. They are fairly honest and simple-minded, but conspicuously lacking in chastity and cleanliness. From simple and natural marriage customs they are debarred by the restricted nature of the country, and by the intense cold in winter, from ablutions, which they also dispense with in summer by choice."

361 On entering the town one passes through a gateway into the
● 526 main street, one which is shaded by great poplars on both sides, behind which are the flat-roofed houses with odd rooms piled high on top of each other. In this wide street, as is common in Ladakh, polo used to be played; now there is a special ground for the game by the castle wall. Polo is the national game and is played on small shaggy Ladakh ponies which are fast and on which the rider looks oversized. When a game is in progress in the other towns, the street is cleared, the shops shut, and the onlookers sit on the walls, in windows or on the roof tops. At "important" matches a band blasts furiously, working both players and watchers up to a terrific tension.

[515] The surprising thing is that although the people never wash
[356] and are filthy in their persons, their homes are reasonably clean
342 and tidy, the lanes and streets are swept, and there is no litter or
132 filth lying about. The houses are substantial, with wooden shutters to the windows, for throughout the whole land, although it may be unbearably hot during the day, the nights can be bitter: some declare that a bucket of water stood out on some

2: Biscoe M-3 (1890-ca. 1920) 1922 AV4 Kashmiri
w. Tibetans AV4

CHAPTER XVII

A TRIP TO LADAKH (*continued*)

SOME little time before we reached Mulbe we had heard noises like the bellowings of the bulls of Bashan, for they seemed to be more than ordinary bellowings. As we turned the corner we heard other sounds, such as the beating of drums and cymbals and squealing flageolets, and then came into view the monastery band. The monks were dressed up in their best red garments, with most curious and awe-inspiring headgear, consisting of huge red-cloth helmet-looking erections which gave the band a very smart and martial appearance. The trumpets which bellowed and brayed so loudly were of copper, about seven or eight feet in length, truly colossal.

Then came the abbot of the monastery with his following of monks, together with the great people of Mulbe, to welcome the Commissioner Sahib. They brought presents of food and large jugs of home-made cider, called "chang."

At Mulbe there is an inscription of King Ides abolishing living sacrifices. This was not, however, obeyed, and the people continued to sacrifice goats before the pre-Buddhist altars, tearing out the heart of the living animal. (See Dr E. F. Neve's book, *Beyond the Pir Punjal*.)

In the afternoon we were entertained by a game of polo, for every big village has its polo ground, which is generally kept in good order, the grass being kept green by irrigation.

2
Biscoe M-3 (1890-ca. 1920) 1922 AV4 Kashmiri
W. Tibetans Adj

A Trip to Ladakh

The chief features in which the game differs from Western polo are the following :—

Firstly, there are two long stone walls, about three feet high, built along both sides of the ground, against which the ball is made to rebound; they are also used, by the way, for squeezing your adversary's pony, and if possible the leg of the rider, against the jagged stones, to his great discomfort. Secondly, all the players start at a gallop from one end. The leader then throws the ball into the air and strikes it with the full swing of his stick before it touches the ground, frequently driving it the whole length of the ground and through the goal-posts, which are marked by white stones. But the goal is not counted unless one of the attacking side dismounts and picks up the ball before any of the defenders can knock it out again. When the goal is won the band strikes up a joyful noise, accompanied by plenty of drums. The riders play in a most reckless manner. I have seen both ponies and players receiving terrific whacks, and blood flowing profusely; and sometimes the onlookers receive wounds from standing too near the wall. It is a very ancient and honoured game in these regions.

It is difficult to describe one's feelings as one enters this wonderful country of monasteries and lamas, for one seems to have arrived in quite another world, unimagined and undreamt of; one feels inclined to pinch oneself to see if one is really awake and not dreaming.

On the road one passes walls from 100 to 300 yards long, about eight feet high and eight feet broad, with a pent roof of flat stones of all sizes, on which are carved the same words, "Om mane padme hun," which means, "O God of the Jewel on the Lotus," or, as it has been interpreted to me: "May my soul, O God, be like the jewel of water which lies on the lips of the lotus leaf just

2: Biscoe M-3 (1840-ca. 1920) 1922 AV4 Kashmiri
W. Tibetans AV4

A Trip to Ladakh

574 grand folk dressed in most weird costumes, uncommonly like a well-got-up pantomime.

574 291 793 There were men dressed in Chinese silks, with their smart blue and gold caps with tassels, Ladakhi officials of various grades, from the Joint-Commissioner, a fine-looking Mohammedan, to his fat babu who sat on his pony like a monkey, his stirrups being so short that his knees and fat stomach met. But the figure which took my fancy was the church dignitary; he resembled for all the world Cardinal Wolsey risen from the dead. He wore a scarlet cloak which fell over the pony's back and almost touched the ground, and he sported ye old cardinal's hat. I never saw him smile, which was in contrast to all the others, who seemed to be out for a holiday. Whether he was upset about not having his proper position in the cavalcade, or whether he had the stomach-ache is uncertain, or maybe his cardinal's hat was uncomfortable. It certainly was hardly the sort of hat I should have chosen to ride in. Perhaps his dignity did not allow him to show his feelings. Anyway, everybody except the cardinal seemed to be in good fettle after their morning's ride. We all fell into some sort of order and rode for the capital.

361 574 533 526 You can see Leh from some miles distant as it is built up the side of the rocks, with the palace and monastery towering above. Leh is 11,700 feet above sea-level, so one needs a little time in which to get acclimatised.

When we arrived through the fine gateway into the main street we found both sides lined with H.H. the Maharajah's troops and the crowds of citizens behind them. The monastery band was in full view on the roof of one 574 of the buildings and made the usual joyful sound. This 526 main street of shops has a fine avenue of poplar-trees,

2: Biscoe M-3 (1890-ca. 1920) 1922 AV4 Kashmiri
Kashmir AVI
w. Tibetans A
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A Trip to Ladakh

W.T. 574 526

which gives most grateful shade in the hot summer weather.

As it is very broad, it is the polo ground. It seemed most strange to see the players dashing up and down the main street, often hitting the ball into the shops. Fortunately the shops in Leh do not possess glass windows, otherwise polo in that street would be an expensive amusement.

K 648

Captain Trench was finally escorted to the Residency, which was a two-storeyed stone building in quite a nice garden. There is not a great selection of trees in Leh, poplars and willows being all that I remember seeing in this part of Ladakh, but in lower Ladakh there are apricot, apple and pear trees.

The Commissioner's chief duty is to look after the traders' interests on this main caravan road from India to Central Asia, Yarkand, Turkestan and to China.

W.T. 797

I went to the Moravian missionaries, who had kindly invited Dr E. F. Neve and myself to stay with them. They have been doing a great and useful work here for many years, by means of hospital, schools, and visiting the people in their homes. They had then a congregation of about thirty Christians.

The history of one of them with whom I was connected for some years is interesting. A certain monk in a monastery in Nubra was dying, and he sent for one of the missionaries whom he knew to visit him. Nubra Valley is some fifty miles from Leh over the other side of the Kardang Pass, 17,400 feet high.

The missionary went at once, and was in time to see him before he died. The monk told him that he heard the Gospel through the preaching of the missionaries, and believed in Christ as his Saviour, but had not been bold enough to confess openly on account of the persecution

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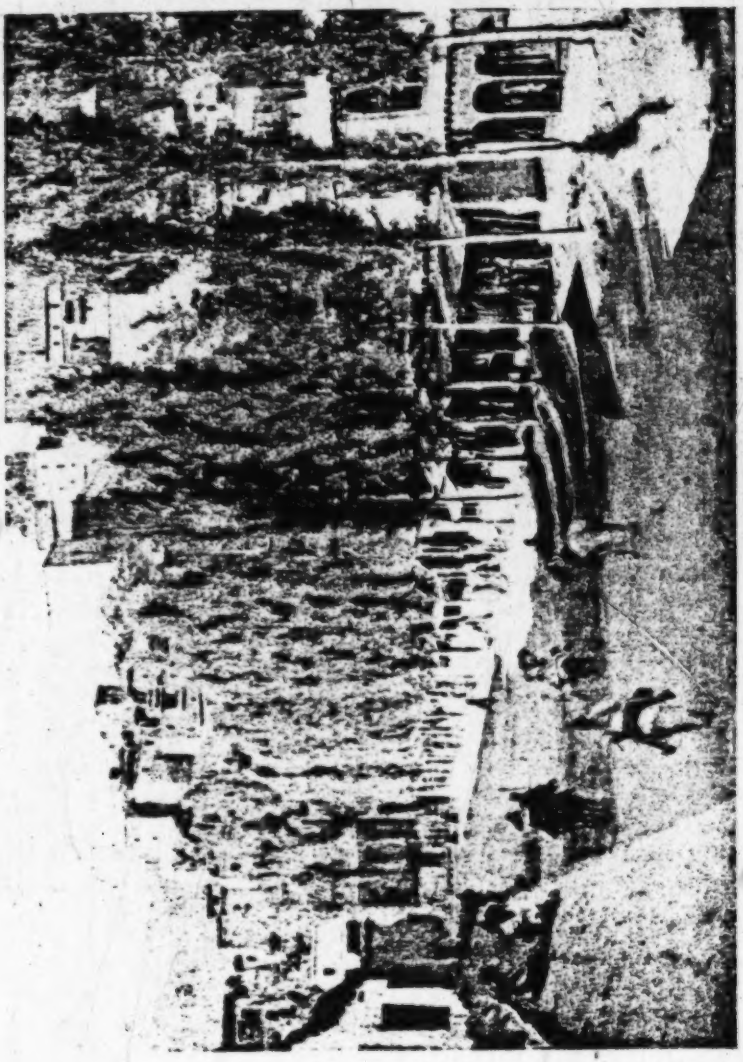

Photo by] [G. W. Millais

HIGH STREET AT LEH.

A polo match is in progress, therefore the street has been cleared.

[facing p. 222]